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BROADCASTERS VICTORY COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE 2113

Number 20

June 16, 1942.

IF IT'S RUBBER, UNCLE SAM WANTS IT **

Biggest business of the week for all broadcasters, of course, has been this Rubber Salvage Drive, initiated to determine just how much scrap rubber lurks in the nation's discarded fishing boots, old bathing caps, worn tires, and busted hot water bottles. The two-week campaign - from June 15 to 30 - needs the unqualified help of every station in the country, plugging away with spot announcements, special programs, talks, and good solid boosts by commentators and regular shows.

All local stations have already received a sheaf of suitable announcements, but that doesn't mean your ingenuity should be left in moth balls. The OFF has dwelt on the urgency of this drive which, you will remember, has been called for by President Roosevelt. Broadcasters are asked to "use all imagination and skill to effectively tell the public four things."

This factual quartet, for the sake of the record, includes: (1) Listeners should take all rubber scrap they can collect to their nearest filling station; (2) One cent per pound will be paid for all that they can bring in; (3) If they can't locate a full pound, they should bring in whatever rubber articles they can collect; and (4) Rubber articles in any form are acceptable. If the listener isn't sure it's rubber, he should take it in anyway.

IT'S DEADLY IMPORTANT **

There is little need to stress the gravity of the rubber shortage for the benefit of broadcasters. They know that more than 90% of the nation's raw supply has been neatly snipped off by our toothy little friends of Nippon. They know that our modern armies roll on rubber, our bombers fly with it, our battleships must have it. And every bit we can salvage from the junk heaps, hall closets, collars and attics of America goes toward assuring American victory.

As you probably know, filling stations of the country have been organized by the oil companies to receive and assemble these supplies of miscellaneous rubber. In some towns, because of the quickness with which the drive broke, it's possible that filling stations aren't completely set up to handle the job. They soon will be, however, and it's recommended that you survey your local situation so as to give this matter the biggest push at the right time.

A few more facts that may help you realize how serious is the need for rubber....the Army and Navy have already been forced to cut their use of rubber by 25%....our potential supply of available rubber for the next two years hinges heavily upon the amount that can be reclaimed - and the reclamation, mind you, is for essential uses only....this drive will give

A very faint, out-of-focus background image of a historical document. The document appears to be a formal letter or certificate, featuring a large, ornate seal in the center. The text is in a cursive or script font, though the details are not legible.

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some indication of how strongly our government may lean upon scrap rubber in formulating further plans.

It's vital, deadly vital. You can't do too much to help out.

ERSATZ IN THE GAS TANK **

Last week, you'll recall, we gave you the opening gun in a little matter involving the "Fearless Motor Fuel Formulas" which is the title of a book the dear radio audience was supposed to buy at two bucks a throw so that it could run its collective automobiles without benefit of gasoline or rationing cards.

To refresh your mind a mite, we shall further mention that the BVC dispatched wires last week to many American broadcasting stations, warning them that the General Advertising Agency of Los Angeles had sent minute announcements (with checks to pay for same), plugging this book, to quite a few broadcasters. The volume tells how, by virtue of certain backyard alchemy, you can make auto fuel substitutes out of kerosene, stove oil, distillate, diesel oil or "many other cheap, harmless non-rationed fuels and chemicals."

In the first place, this kind of thing is smack-bang against all government policy. Both the OPA and the OPA have frowned considerable frowns, and for good reason. Under the Emergency Gasoline Rationing Regulations Title 32, National Defense, Chapter XI, Office of Price Administration, Rationing of Fuel and Fuel Products, Section 1394.1.....it says:

"(g) 'gasoline' means liquid fuel, except Diesel fuel, used for the propulsion of motor vehicles or motor boats by means of internal combustion engines and shall include any liquid fuel to which Federal taxes supply except liquid fuel used for the propulsion of aircraft."

That ought to be plain enough. It's certainly clear to the BVC that stations who accept and carry any announcements advertising this "Fearless Motor Fuel Formulas" booklet are not helping the war effort one whit. Legally, of course, there lurks serious danger that an advertisement like this, implying that such fuel may be used without thought of rationing restrictions, is grossly misleading. As a matter of fact, there are indications that if efforts are made to sell the book, the Federal Trade Commission may step in with a good punitive investigation.

And furthermore, this is not just a matter of gasoline conservation alone. There's a question of saving rubber too. Regardless from what angle you look at it, the thing is better left alone. And we trust you'll leave it that way.

TO HONOR THE RUSSIANS **

One year ago - come this June 22 - the Luftwaffe broke over the border of Russia in one of those savage, unexpected attacks that seem to be the Axis notion of how a war should be declared. The Nazi military machine rolled against a Red Army that was vastly under-rated. The world wrung its hands and moaned disaster.

But the Red Army, after retreating stubbornly, suddenly turned to a wall of steel and, for the very first time, we in America and the other United Nations began to see, understand and have deep sympathy for the people of Russia.

The OFF, in pointing out that June 22 is the first anniversary of Germany's attack which opened the eastern front, suggests that much can be done by broadcasters to honor the gallant defense that Russia has displayed - and the service its courage renders our own cause as allies.

We understand that the Russian War Relief has approached a number of stations, requesting air time in connection with this anniversary. Sometimes they've been turned down, and on the inane basis that the OFF priority and allocation plans don't mention such an organization. There's much misunderstanding at work here. The OFF doesn't list private organizations - and the Russian War Relief, like the United China Relief, is just that. Efforts have been made - apparently with incomplete success - to let stations know that only official government drives and agencies are covered in the OFF Radio War Guide and allocation plans.

Both the Russian War Relief and the United China Relief are carrying on splendid work. They deserve your support, and we hope you'll find room on your program schedule to give it to them.

GOOD IDEAS DEPT. **

.....If you're running a series of programs designed to show up the Axis leaders and ideologies for what they are, we commend to your attention the rather gory spectacle of a little town called Lidice in Czechoslovakia where the entire male population was exterminated last week because a Nazi gang-leader, called Reinhard Heydrich, was allegedly murdered. The OFF can give you pertinent facts. It's the kind of concrete brutality that brings the nature of the Nazis into the full daylight.

.....A smart scheme for putting a little extra punch into the Rubber Salvage Drive has been offered by WSGN, Birmingham, Ala., which suggests that station breaks be made thusly: "This is WXXX of North Overshoes, Nebraska, reminding you to take your scrap rubber to the nearest filling station." (Of course you use your own call letters and location, unless you actually are WXXX in North Overshoes, Nebraska.) Other stations have been plugging slogans like "Rubber scraps will beat the Japs."

.....There's a good idea waiting to be developed in a regular series of interviews by one of your better commentators - if you haven't thought of it already. Each week you could bring to the mike a representative of some different United Nation. Much can be done this way to acquaint your listeners with the people, achievements, problems, culture and ambitions of our allies. Almost every community has regular residents who have come from most of the United Nations. A little research might produce a useful and interesting show.

.....Control operators at WRVA in Richmond, Va., have made a pact among themselves whereby any man who ruffs a cue or otherwise mishandles a program will voluntarily buy a War Stamp for every other member of the control room staff on duty at the time. "I hope," writes WRVA General Manager C.T. Luccy, "no one will wisecrack that such a plan would not be worthwhile in their

establishment because of the scarcity of mis-cues, because we all have them and perhaps this more-or-less unique plan will not only make the boys more efficient, but also contribute to the sale of War Stamps and Bonds."

THE COAL CONTROVERSY **

Definitely disquieting were reports that reached us recently saying government representatives have urged coal dealers in at least one big city to pare down their advertising appropriations because "the government is doing the advertising for you, and therefore you don't have to pay for it." The reference, of course, concerns the buy-your-coal-now drive which radio has so whole-heartedly pushed, having been assured that transportation shortages this coming winter might make coal virtually unobtainable for the average citizen.

The incident in question came about when coal dealers in this certain city petitioned to have the price ceiling raised as an offset to the increased cost of doing business. Government representatives studied their books and urged the elimination of advertising. Basically, what they said might be considered as true - except it makes radio look like an awful sucker. The free announcements broadcasters have given at the request of the Department of the Interior amount to institutional advertising for the coal industry. But they're also essential, and have been willingly given as a public service necessity.

The BVC, upon learning of this case, checked with the Office of Solid Fuels Coordination, Department of the Interior, and found a quick response. There is no official intent to discourage advertising by retail coal dealers. In fact dealers have been asked, through their local associations, to conduct advertising campaigns that will stimulate the movement and storage of coal during the summer months.

In conclusion, H. A. Gray, acting director of this office, writes a paragraph we're passing along - because it's addressed to you: "Please assure the radio stations of this country that they have the heartiest support and gratitude of this office in the work they are doing, both at the request of this office and in dealer-sponsored, paid advertising campaigns, to stimulate the summer movement of coal. The work they are doing is proving very effective in attaining the results desired by the Government as a means of protecting the public's supply of coal for next winter."

MAN WITH DELUSIONS **

If somebody walks into your office one of these days and says he's from the Office of Facts and Figures - or implies that he's from the Office of Facts and Figures, or that he represents it, or has connections with it - ask the gentleman for his credentials. Particularly if he has a mild cockney accent.

It's not inconceivable, of course, that a bona fide OFF man might be around some time, and we shouldn't like to hear that you've shot him on sight. But there are indications that at least one impostor has made the rounds of several New England stations, speaking freely about OFF policies and how the OFF would like to see this in programs, but not that. Inquiries from one of the stations reveal that the OFF disclaims any connection with the individual in question. So should you, if he shows up in your bailiwick.

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